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THTR 235L.01: Dramatic Literature

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Dramatic Literature	
THTR 235L.01, 3 credits, Literary, Culture & Artistic Studies Course	
School of Theatre & Dance	
Instructor Natasha Conti	Class Dates & Location Tuesday Thursday 11:00a-12:20p DAH 316
Contact Information Natasha.conti@umontana.edu UMOnline: 406.243.4999 Tech Support	Office Hours F 9:50-10:50a, 1:00-2:00p PARTV 014 (Makeup Room)

Course Overview

This course is designed to familiarize the student with various aspects of dramatic literature. Students will investigate this topic through literary criticism and script analysis of six plays. Due to the nature of the material, attention will also be given to theatre as a practical art form inspired by the written text. Selected scenes will be considered in performance on film, through class demonstration, and through attending live performances. This course, faithfully undertaken, will provide students with a strong foundational knowledge of story, structure, dramatic action, character development, symbolic layering and theme that will enhance their skills and experiences as perceptive and participatory readers, writers, audience members, and potential practitioners of theatre.

Expected Student Learning Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a broad knowledge of dramatic literature, style, context, plot, structure, and character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a knowledge of chosen play texts through close reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a critically informed understanding of chosen play texts through reading and analysis of critical material
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an understanding of how each play performs its language, characters, place, plot, politics, context and the conditions of contemporaneous production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have engaged with this work through script analysis, scene study, research and critique
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have articulated their engagement with the work through formal research and writing of structured criticism and analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have developed the skills necessary to engage in independent criticism and analysis of dramatic literature as a practitioner, reader, or audience member

Required Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Writing About Theatre</i> by Christopher Thaiss & Rick Davis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any edition of the five play texts listed in the schedule (the Norton vol. 2, which is at the Bookstore and which you'll need eventually, has all but <i>Thinner Than Water</i> & <i>Madwoman</i>, both of which you should be able to procure without too much trouble).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tickets to the UM Productions of <i>Thinner Than Water</i>, <i>Madwoman of Chailot</i> and <i>Noises Off</i>. Theatre majors are entitled to one ticket to each of these performances via their "majors card." All declared Majors receive a Majors Card from Erin McDaniel

in the first weeks of the fall semester. General Education students and Minors must purchase tickets at the UMArts Box Office in the PARTV Center Lobby. Plan ahead and procure your tickets before the performance you intend to see. The UMArts Box Office will be open January 17-May 12, Tuesdays-Fridays from noon-6P plus one hour before a performance.

Course Schedule	
Date	Topic/Assignments
Unit 1 Jan 24 – Feb 14	<i>“MASTER HAROLD” . . . and the boys</i> by Athol Fugard Essay #1 due Feb 14
Unit 2 Feb 16 – Mar 2	<i>Thinner Than Water</i> by Melissa Ross Required viewing of <i>Thinner Than Water</i> in performance Essay #2 due March 2
Unit 3 Mar 7 – Mar 28	<i>Angels in America, Part 1: Millennium Approaches</i> by Tony Kushner Essay #3 due Mar 28
Unit 4 Mar 30 – Apr 13	<i>The Madwoman of Chaillot</i> by Jean Giraudoux, Adapted by Maurice Valency Required viewing of <i>Madwoman</i> in performance Essay #4 due Apr 13
Unit 5 Apr 18 – May 4	<i>MACHINAL</i> by Sophie Treadwell Required viewing of <i>Noises Off</i> in performance
Final Essay	Due Tuesday May 9 at 11:55 pm on Moodle

*Please note: other than *MASTER HAROLD*, all plays must be read in their entirety on the first day of the unit.

Attendance and Participation

This course is participatory in nature. School of Theatre & Dance policies will be enforced strictly. Only documented absences will be excused. Points will be awarded for participation each day:

- 5 The student was actively participating in class, obviously well prepared, and positively engaged with the material and fellow classmates.
- 4 The student was present, somewhat prepared, but not fully engaged
- 3-0 The student was unprepared, late, disruptive, disrespectful or absent

In addition to points lost for participation, every three unexcused absences will cause the student’s final grade for the course to be dropped by 10%, and every two tardies will count as an unexcused absence. Students more than 10 minutes late will be marked absent.

A solid work ethic is expected in this class so high marks and good attendance should be the norm. Poor work will stand out. Students receiving low marks for participation should meet with me to discuss the problem and how it will be resolved.

Electronic Resources

In this class we will embrace twenty-first century technology as the incredible resource that it is. Therefore, email is the required method of communication for the course. Please check your email and Moodle frequently throughout the day. Due to its unreliability, refrain from messaging me on Moodle using the IM feature. I will always contact you using the primary email stored in Moodle and Cyberbear so be sure that your information is up to date.

If you have course materials stored on your phone, tablet, laptop or equivalent device, please set it to “Airplane Mode” so that the functionality is limited to stored data retrieval for class participation. Please silence and stow other unneeded electronic devices. I will have my phone on vibrate in case an emergency message should be sent by the university. If accessing the web becomes necessary, inform me that you are doing so for the benefit of the entire class. Raise your hand and proclaim, “I’m Googling it!”

If one of your devices rings accidentally during class, please silence it as quickly as humanly possible. Don’t be embarrassed, just turn it off and all will be forgiven. Having said that anyone caught text messaging or frivolously surfing the web will be dismissed immediately from class, resulting in a complete absence. I’M NOT KIDDING.

Grading Scale:	
A	100 – 90%
B	89 – 80%
C	79 – 70 %
D	69 – 60%
F	59 and Below
Assignments:	Percentage:
Quizzes and class assignments	30%
Unit Essays (4)	30%
Dramaturgical Presentation	10%
Participation	10%
Final Essay	20%

Course Policies and Procedures

Late Work Policy: In general, late work is not accepted. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis at the instructor’s discretion, sometimes for partial credit, depending on the circumstance. Advance notice is always helpful. Late work will not be accepted as a result of student error or Moodle malfunction.

Essay Submission Policy: All course essays will be assigned and submitted via Moodle. You are expected to check the web weekly in order to participate fully in the class. All written work must be formatted in the manner stated on the assignment page and submitted as a .doc,

.docx, or .pdf document via Moodle by the beginning of class on the date due. I will not accept paper copies or email submissions.

Extra Credit: A small amount of extra credit will be available periodically over the course of the semester in the form of the attendance and written critique of additional theatrical productions. These production opportunities will be announced as the semester progresses. Each critique is worth one third that of a unit essay; up to two may be submitted for extra credit.

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php.

All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance Student Handbook. The Handbook is available online at <http://www.umt.edu/umarts/theatredance/About/handbook.php>.

There is inherent risk involved in many Theatre & Dance classes as they are very physical in nature. Please proceed through class, shop time, or rehearsal with caution. Always be mindful of your personal safety and the safety of others. Students participating in class/shop/rehearsal/performance do so at their own risk.

Due to safety considerations, at no point during a student's time spent in class or serving on a production (in any capacity) should non-enrolled persons be guests of that student without my consent. Presence of such unauthorized persons in a class, shop, or any backstage/off-stage area will negatively affect a student's grade.

Disability Services for Students (DSS): Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me within the first week of the semester. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. For more information, please consult <http://life.umt.edu/dss/>.

Technical Requirements: Students must have access to a working computer with internet service in order to complete the course. Visit the UOnline web page that lists downloads and plug-ins that students may need in order to access Moodle.